


 Cite this: *RSC Adv.*, 2025, 15, 35756

Heavy metal pollution in aquatic environments and removal using highly efficient bimetallic metal–organic framework adsorbents

Kawan F. Kayani * and Sewara J. Mohammed

Rapid urbanization and industrial development worldwide have significantly increased the release and spread of anthropogenic heavy metals, extending their impact from local sources to broader regions. This growing pollution poses serious risks to human health and aquatic ecosystems. Although extensive research has been conducted on the removal of heavy metal from water, existing treatment methods still require optimization for improved efficiency and specificity. Among these, adsorption is recognized as the most effective technique, with bimetallic metal–organic frameworks (BMOFs) emerging as highly promising adsorbents due to their exceptional adsorption capabilities and potential to address complex environmental challenges. Therefore, it is essential to implement measures that reduce heavy metal concentrations in water to safe levels. This review provides a detailed account of the sources and toxicity of heavy metals to humans and ecosystems. It explains BMOFs, their synthesis, and mechanisms of interaction with heavy metals, and, for the first time, explores the application of BMOFs for the removal of heavy metals from aqueous environments. In summary, this review offers a comprehensive overview of the latest progress in BMOF-based heavy metal remediation, providing valuable insights for future BMOF synthesis and practical solutions for water decontamination.

 Received 24th August 2025
 Accepted 22nd September 2025

DOI: 10.1039/d5ra06296a

rsc.li/rsc-advances

1. Introduction

The availability of clean, high-quality water is essential for social, human health, and economic development, and the stability of global ecosystems.^{1–3} As water is a fundamental need for all forms of life, rapid urban growth and industrialization have significantly increased its demand. Beyond daily human consumption, water plays a vital role in numerous sectors, including residential use, agriculture, petroleum refining, pharmaceuticals, and medical applications. However, these activities often introduce harmful pollutants and waste materials into water sources.⁴ Many industrial processes, in particular, generate hazardous waste that poses a serious threat to environmental and public health.

Heavy metal pollution, in particular, has become one of the most pressing environmental challenges.⁵ With the rapid expansion of industries such as mining, metal plating, fertilizer production, tanneries, battery manufacturing, pesticide use and paper production, the release of heavy metals into the environment is on the rise, particularly in developing countries. In contrast to organic pollutants, heavy metals are non-biodegradable and can build up in living organisms. Many of these metals, such as zinc, copper, cadmium, nickel, mercury,

chromium, and lead, are known to be toxic or carcinogenic.⁶ The effective removal of heavy metals from water systems remains a critical yet challenging task for environmental engineers. Heavy metal contamination in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems is a major environmental issue with serious public health implications. Although many heavy metals occur naturally, anthropogenic activities have significantly increased their concentrations.⁷ Removal is essential due to the wide-ranging hazards they pose: to humans, they can cause liver damage, respiratory, neurological, and cardiovascular disorders; to ecosystems, they impair plant growth, reduce biodiversity, and disrupt the behavioral, biochemical, physiological, and reproductive functions of aquatic organisms; to water sources, they degrade quality, alter physical and chemical properties, disturb ecological balance, and reduce dissolved oxygen; and to industries, they result in regulatory noncompliance, costly remediation, and reputational damage.^{2,8–10}

Several techniques have been developed for the removal of heavy metals, including adsorption,¹¹ ion exchange,¹² membrane filtration,¹³ chemical precipitation,¹⁴ and electrochemical methods.¹⁵ Among these, adsorption stands out due to its design flexibility, operational simplicity, and ability to produce high-quality treated water. Moreover, many adsorbents can be regenerated through cost-effective and efficient desorption processes, allowing for repeated use.^{16,17} As a result, adsorption has emerged as a leading method for the removal of heavy metals from contaminated water and wastewater.

Department of Chemistry, College of Science, University of Sulaimani, Kurdistan Regional Government, Qlyasan Street, Sulaymaniyah, 46001, Iraq. E-mail: kawan.nasraddin@univsul.edu.iq



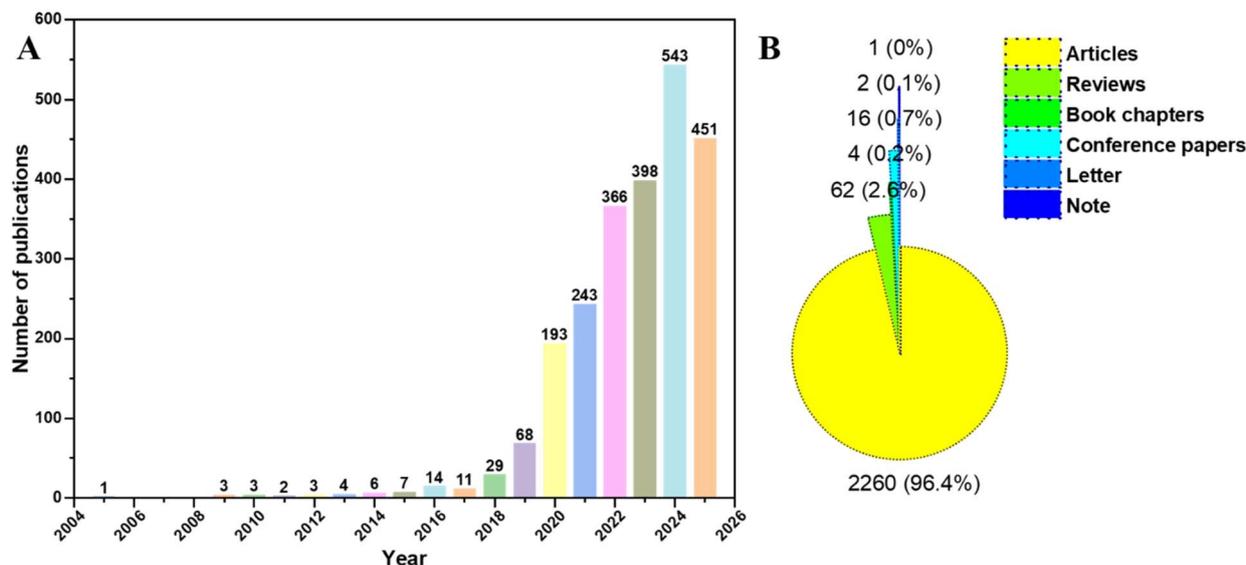


Fig. 1 (A) Number of papers published on “Metal–Organic Frameworks” and “Bimetallics,” and (B) types of papers published from 2005 to 2025, based on a Scopus database search.

Although numerous researchers have employed various adsorbents such as activated carbon, zeolites, lignite coke, ash, activated alumina, clay, and natural fibers to remove heavy metal ions from wastewater, the adsorption capacity and selectivity largely depend on the chemical and physical characteristics of both the adsorbent and the adsorbate.¹⁸ Consequently, over the past decade, increasing attention has been given to developing more effective and advanced adsorbents through the combination of different composite materials.

Metal–organic frameworks (MOFs) represent a unique class of porous materials formed by metal ions coordinated with organic ligands, resulting in one-, two-, or three-dimensional structures.^{19–21} Numerous studies have identified MOFs as highly promising materials in diverse fields such as catalysis,²² separation,²³ sensing,²⁴ drug delivery,²⁵ water treatment,^{26–32} and energy storage and conversion.³³ Their exceptional properties including adjustable pore size, high surface area, tunable structures, and versatile chemical composition make them especially suitable for adsorption-based applications.^{34,35} In the field of water treatment, MOFs have demonstrated outstanding potential due to their excellent porosity and surface functionality.³⁶ However, some limitations remain, including low water stability, limited chemical resistance, and the presence of micropores that can restrict access to certain target ions.^{37,38} To overcome these challenges, researchers have explored the development of BMOFs by incorporating two different metal ions into the framework. This integration enhances both the physical and chemical properties, often resulting in a synergistic effect or dual-function mechanism that improves overall stability and performance.^{39–43} Therefore, BMOFs, synthesized by incorporating different metal ions, often demonstrate superior adsorption performance for heavy metal removal compared to their monometallic counterparts.

This review stands out for its exclusive focus on the application of BMOFs as adsorbents for heavy metal removal an area

that has not been specifically addressed in previous reviews. A search of the Scopus database using the keywords “Metal–Organic Frameworks” and “Bimetallics” revealed significant growth in related publications between 2005 and 2025. This upward trend is illustrated in Fig. 1A, which shows a sharp increase in cumulative publications, particularly over the past five years, indicating a growing interest in BMOFs for various applications. Additionally, the distribution of publication types is presented in Fig. 1B. All data were retrieved from the Scopus database in July 2025.

Numerous research groups have investigated various approaches for treating wastewater contaminated with heavy metals using different materials.^{31–33} This review summarizes the application of BMOFs for heavy metal removal, highlighting their superior adsorption performance compared to other materials. It also examines the occurrence of heavy metals, their adverse effects on the environment and human health, the introduction of BMOFs, the interaction mechanisms between BMOFs and heavy metals, and the potential future applications of BMOFs in this field. To the best of our knowledge, no prior review has thoroughly addressed the use of BMOFs specifically for heavy metal removal. Thus, this paper seeks to present current insights into the application of BMOFs for treating wastewater contaminated with toxic metals and to propose future research directions. As illustrated in Fig. 2.

1.1 Scientific novelty of this review

Numerous reviews have been published on MOFs across environmental fields, often focusing on quality assessments in the existing literature. For example, Adil *et al.* summarized the use of MOF-based nanofibers for heavy metal removal,⁴⁴ Mubarak *et al.* reviewed MOFs for removing heavy metals from contaminated water,⁴⁵ and Yuan *et al.* provided an overview of heavy metal removal from water *via* adsorption on MOFs.⁴⁶



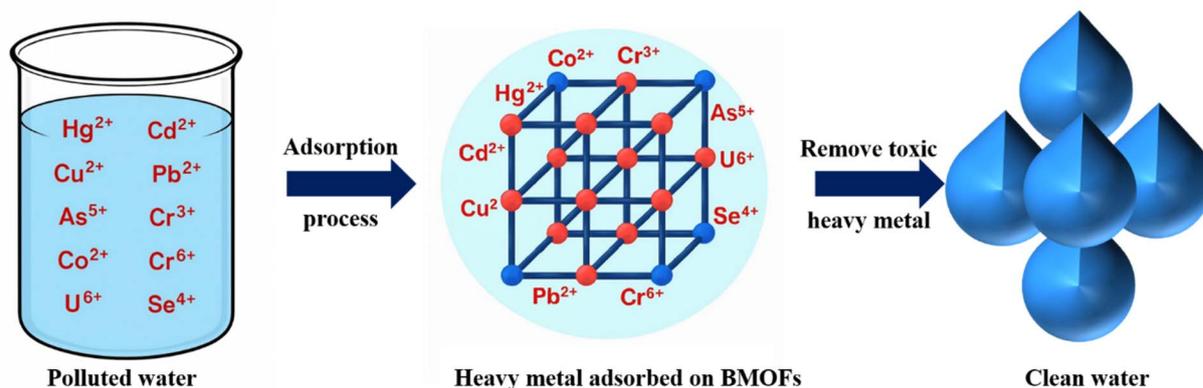


Fig. 2 Schematic diagram illustrating the removal of heavy metals by BMOFs.

Although previous studies have made significant contributions, no comprehensive review has specifically focused on BMOFs for heavy metal removal. Recent research on the use of BMOFs in various applications has garnered increasing attention. This review, for the first time, examines the emerging field of BMOFs, providing a detailed overview of their potential in environmental remediation. It discusses the sources and toxicity of heavy metals to human health and ecosystems, the characteristics and synthesis methods of BMOFs, and the adsorption mechanisms between heavy metals and BMOFs. Furthermore, the review highlights the application of BMOFs in removing metals such as chromium, mercury, uranium, copper, lead, and other metals. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of BMOFs as innovative adsorbents for heavy metal removal, emphasizing the significance and timeliness of this review in the environmental field.

2. Heavy metals: sources and toxicity to human health and ecosystems

Heavy metals originate from both natural and anthropogenic sources, each contributing to environmental contamination to varying degrees. Natural sources include volcanic eruptions, rock weathering, forest fires, biological activity, sea spray, and other geochemical processes through which heavy metals are introduced into ecosystems. Natural disasters particularly floods, but also earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, and tsunamis can significantly influence the release and distribution of heavy metals into aquatic environments.⁴⁷ While these natural inputs are generally less harmful and can often be assimilated by the environment, anthropogenic sources are far more significant and detrimental. Human activities such as smelting, mining, fossil fuel combustion, industrial effluent discharge, sewage sludge disposal, agricultural runoff, and emissions from vehicles contribute substantially to heavy metal pollution. Atmospheric deposition and rainfall can further transfer these contaminants from air and soil into water bodies.⁴⁸ Among these, mining and smelting are the most

dominant contributors, with smelting alone accounting for an estimated 40–73% of total anthropogenic heavy metal emissions.^{49,50} Despite their environmental severity, anthropogenic sources are more manageable through regulatory measures, technological advancements, and improved industrial practices. Therefore, controlling human-derived pollution is critical for reducing heavy metal contamination and protecting ecological and human health.⁵¹

The primary contributors to heavy metal pollution in the environment include activities such as milling, mining, metal plating, and surface finishing industries.⁵² These sectors are major sources of a wide range of toxic metals released into the atmosphere, including chromium (Cr), cobalt (Co), zinc (Zn), copper (Cu), lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd), and nickel (Ni).⁵³ Over the past several decades, the concentrations of these metals in water bodies and sediments have significantly increased. Consequently, the accumulation of heavy metals in agricultural soils has led to elevated levels of toxic metals in grains and vegetables, posing a serious threat to both human health and the environment. This risk is exacerbated by the toxic, non-biodegradable, and bioaccumulative nature of heavy metals, which enables them to persist in ecosystems and enter the food chain.⁵⁴ Exposure to these metals can lead to a range of adverse health effects, including carcinogenicity, neurotoxicity, hepatotoxicity, nephrotoxicity, and disruption of endocrine and immune system functions.⁵⁵

In ecosystems, heavy metals disrupt biological processes and alter the structure and function of microbial, plant, and animal communities.⁴⁹ In soils, they can reduce microbial diversity, inhibit enzymatic activity, and suppress plant growth by interfering with nutrient uptake.^{56,57} In aquatic environments, heavy metals can bioaccumulate in fish and other organisms, leading to oxidative stress, reproductive impairments, and increased mortality.⁵⁸ These effects can cascade through food webs, ultimately threatening biodiversity and ecosystem stability.⁵⁹ Due to their persistence and cumulative toxicity, heavy metals are classified as priority pollutants by environmental protection agencies worldwide.⁸ Therefore, controlling their release and



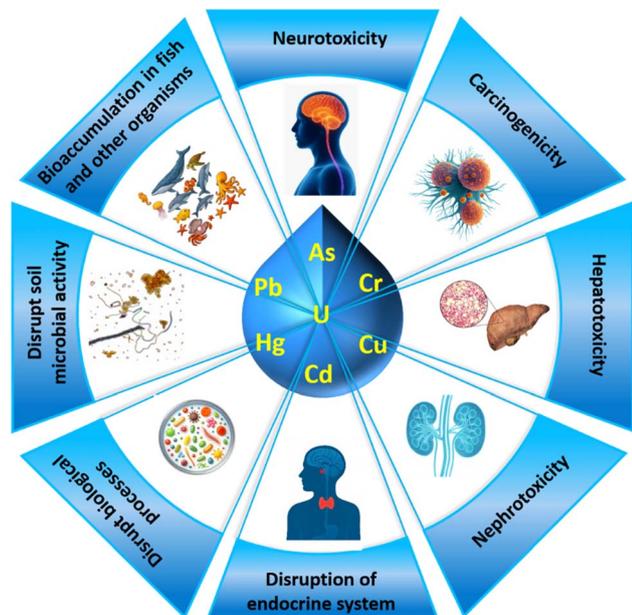


Fig. 3 Toxicity of heavy metals for human health and ecosystems.

mitigating their impacts through effective remediation strategies and policy interventions is critical to protecting both environmental and public health. The toxicity of heavy metals for both humans and the environment is depicted in Fig. 3.

3. Bimetallic metal–organic frameworks advantages

Traditionally, a variety of adsorbents such as carbon-based materials, minerals, macromolecules, and biomass have been employed for the removal of heavy metal ions from aqueous media. However, these conventional adsorbents suffer from limitations such as poor selectivity and relatively slow adsorption kinetics, often attributed to disordered pore structures that hinder the effective transport of metal ions.⁶⁰ Additionally, pretreatment steps such as acidification or functionalization with specific chemical groups are often required to enhance adsorption capacity and selectivity due to the weak coordination interactions between the adsorbent and metal ions.⁶¹ Recently, MOFs have emerged as highly promising materials for the removal of heavy metals from contaminated water, owing to their exceptional adsorption efficiency.⁶² MOFs are crystalline porous materials constructed from metal ions coordinated with organic linkers, forming three-dimensional hybrid networks.^{63,64} Their high surface area, tunable porosity, and well-defined pore structures make them particularly suitable for water purification applications.^{65,66}

To further improve their performance, recent research has focused on developing bimetallic MOFs by incorporating two different metal ions into the framework.⁶⁷ This approach introduces synergistic effects by enabling partial substitution at the metal nodes or secondary building units (SBUs), enhancing structural stability and allowing the tuning of physicochemical

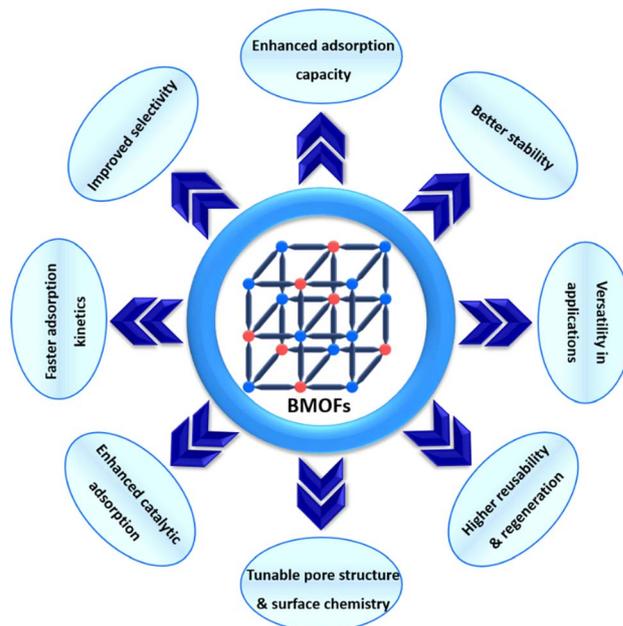


Fig. 4 Comparison of the key advantages of BMOFs over conventional adsorbent.

properties.⁶⁸ Bimetallic MOFs show superior performance compared to monometallic counterparts, particularly in catalysis, sensing, gas storage, and drug delivery.⁶⁹ In environmental remediation, their enhanced surface characteristics, increased number of active sites, and stronger host–guest interactions contribute to a significantly higher maximum adsorption capacity (q_m) for a wide range of heavy metal ions. For example, a Ni/Cd-MOF demonstrated a q_m of 950.61 mg g⁻¹ for Pb(II), approximately twice that of the single-metal Ni-MOF.⁷⁰ Similarly, the adsorption performance for arsenic was notably improved in the Fe/Al-BDC-NH₂ bimetallic MOF synthesized by Yin *et al.*, which incorporated both iron and aluminum, compared to the corresponding monometallic frameworks Fe-BDC-NH₂ and Al-BDC-NH₂.⁷¹ These findings suggest that BMOFs, prepared by incorporating different metal elements, can exhibit superior adsorption properties compared to their monometallic counterparts. The advantages of BMOFs over other adsorbents are illustrated in Fig. 4.

3.1 Synthesis of bimetallic metal–organic frameworks

As shown in Fig. 5, it presents a schematic of two synthesis routes for BMOFs: (a) one-step *in situ* synthesis and (b) post-synthetic modification. In the one-step approach, two different metals and organic linkers are combined simultaneously to form a BMOF. The post-synthetic method involves a two-step process, in which a MOF is first prepared using conventional methods, followed by the partial replacement of primary metal atoms with secondary ones to enhance electrical conductivity through the formation of hetero-surfaces.⁷²

BMOFs can be synthesized *via* several approaches. One-pot synthesis (OPS) integrates two metal salts in a single reaction, forming complex networks with synergistic effects, while



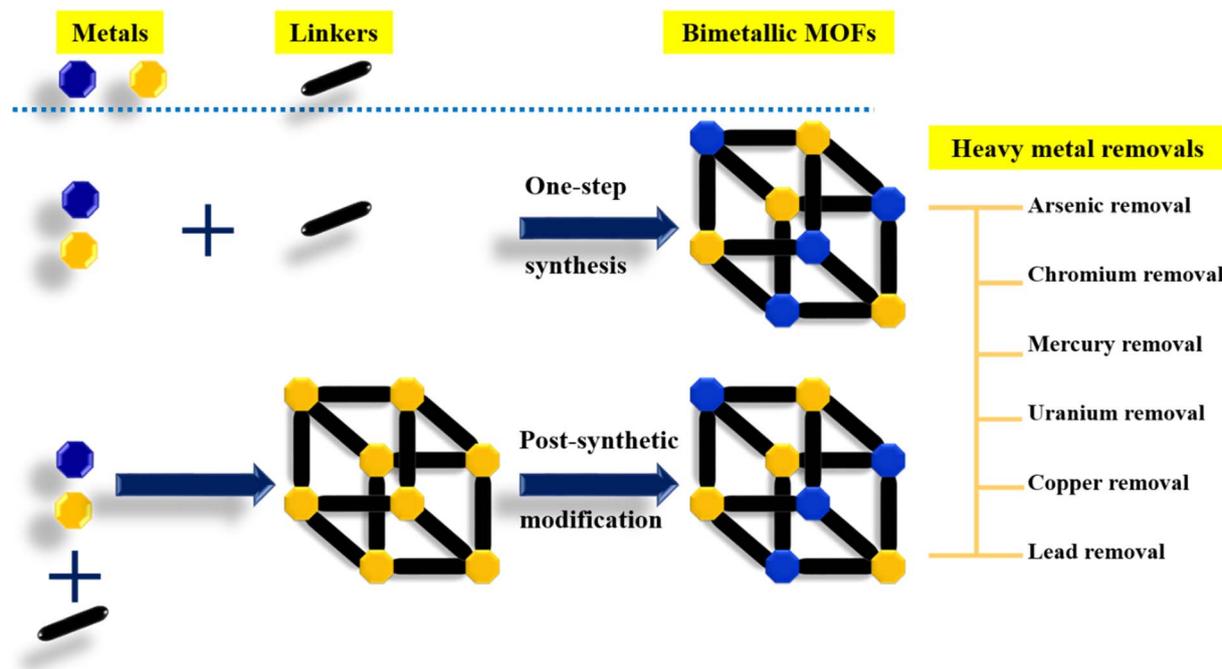


Fig. 5 Schematic of BMOF synthesis via one-step and post-synthetic approaches.

simplifying the process and reducing intermediate steps.⁷³ Post-synthetic modification uses metal ion exchange in preformed MOFs, influenced by factors such as coordination number, ionic radius, lattice flexibility, and solvent; for example, Cu^{2+} often replaces Cd^{2+} , Zn^{2+} , or Mn^{2+} , whereas Cd^{2+} and Pb^{2+} exchange faster due to labile bonds.⁶⁸ Direct synthesis combines metal ions during MOF formation but can yield brittle frameworks with unpredictable properties, requiring careful control of pH, reactivity, solubility, and coordination to achieve the desired metal ratio.⁶⁹ Template methods regulate metal composition and can produce hollow BMOFs with enhanced active sites and mass transport, using either self-template (dissolution–regrowth) or exterior-template (sacrificial template removal) strategies.⁴¹

3.2 Forces between bimetallic metal–organic framework adsorbents and heavy metal ion adsorbates

The efficiency of heavy metal removal by BMOFs depends on the interaction forces between the adsorbent and the adsorbate. These forces are typically classified into two categories: chemical adsorption (chemisorption) and physical adsorption (physisorption).^{74,75} Physisorption, or physical adsorption, takes place when adsorbate particles attach to the adsorbent surface via weak intermolecular forces, such as van der Waals interactions. In contrast, chemisorption refers to the process where adsorbate molecules attach to the adsorbent surface through chemical forces or the formation of chemical bonds.⁷⁶ MOFs exhibit enhanced adsorption capabilities due to the synergistic effects arising from the incorporation of two different metal ions within their structures. Primarily, coordination bonds form between the unsaturated metal sites in the MOF and heavy metal ions, facilitated by electron pair donation from donor

atoms (e.g., oxygen, nitrogen) present in organic linkers or metal nodes. The presence of two distinct metal centers expands the diversity and density of these active sites, allowing stronger and more selective binding to heavy metal ions.⁷⁷ For example, Yu *et al.* prepared a novel Zn/Ni-MOF. The Hg(II) adsorption capacity of the BMOF reached 744.4 mg g^{-1} . More impressively, the BMOF successfully removed 99.99% of mercury. This suggests that the main adsorption mechanism of the BMOF is driven by the strong coordination between the –SH groups and mercury ions, with electrostatic attraction playing a lesser role.⁷⁸

Electrostatic interactions also play a critical role, particularly when bimetallic MOFs possess tunable surface charges that attract oppositely charged metal ions, thereby enhancing adsorption. For instance, Zeng *et al.* successfully synthesized a bimetallic coordination polymer (Ti/Zr-TA) for the removal of mercury from wastewater. The material exhibited high adsorption capacities of 583.5, 615.4, and 654.4 mg g^{-1} at different temperatures. The study further revealed that the adsorption mechanism involved both electrostatic interactions and chelation, with the latter specifically the coordination between mercury ions and oxygen- or sulfur-containing functional groups playing the dominant role.⁷⁹ In addition, ion-exchange mechanisms are significant, as metal ions within the MOF framework can be replaced by heavy metal ions in solution, thereby facilitating efficient capture. For example, the Zn/Cu-BTC- NH_2 metal–organic framework (MOF) enhances Pb^{2+} uptake by promoting amino group-mediated adsorption and enabling ion exchange between copper and lead ions. The enrichment mechanism was identified as a combination of Pb^{2+} adsorption through – NH_2 functional groups and ion exchange involving the substitution of Cu ions with Pb^{2+} .⁸⁰ Lastly, during



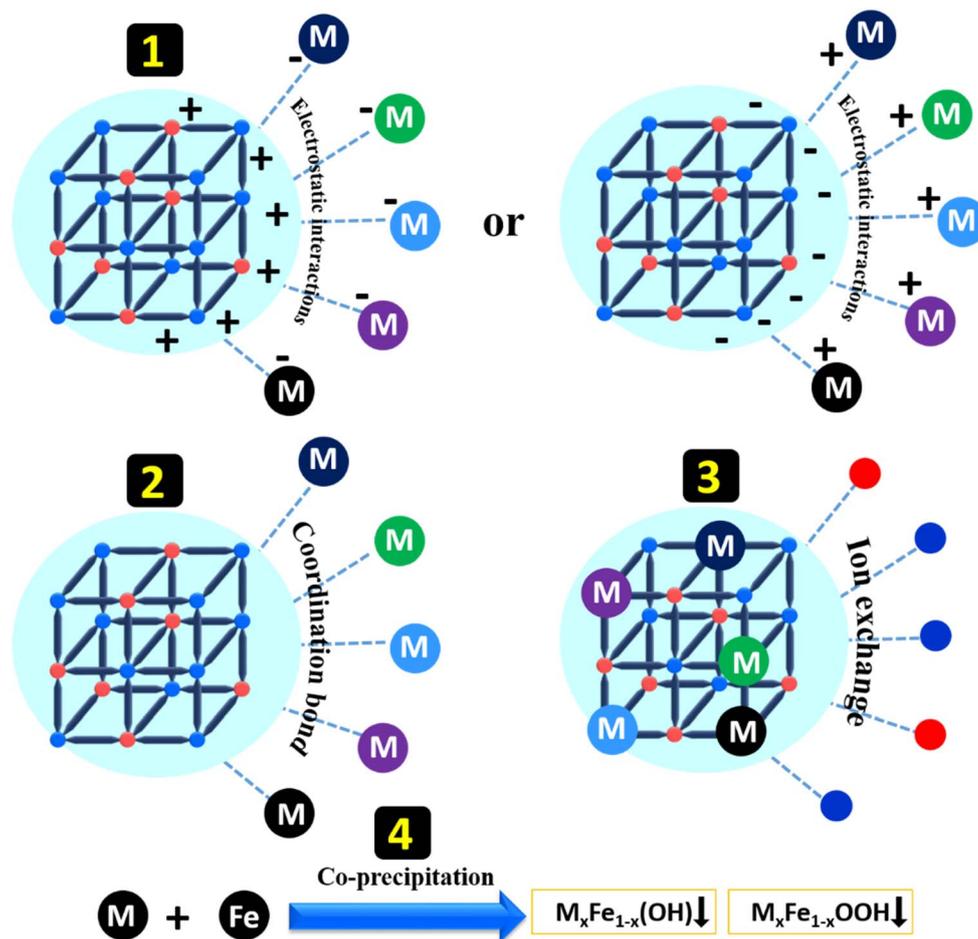


Fig. 6 Schematic illustration of the mechanism between heavy metals and BMOFs.

co-precipitation, contaminants become physically or chemically bound within the iron oxides generated by the corrosion of zero-valent iron, resulting in their immobilization and subsequent removal from water.⁸¹ Collectively, these forces provide bimetallic MOFs with superior adsorption capacity, selectivity, and stability compared to their monometallic counterparts, making them highly effective for heavy metal remediation (Fig. 6).

4. Removal of heavy metals from aquatic environments

BMOFs that have been studied for the removal of heavy metal ions from water are described. Table 1 summarizes all the studies discussed, providing an overview of the key information reported in the literature. The following subsections are divided by the specific metal adsorbed and discuss the findings of each study in detail, based on the information provided by the respective authors.

4.1 Arsenic removal

Arsenic is a ubiquitous metalloids element that primarily exists in nature in the form of various compounds. These arsenic

compounds can be found in sediments, soil, and water, and have been classified as Group 1 carcinogens due to their high toxicity. Ecotoxicological studies have reported that excessive exposure to arsenic and long-term consumption of arsenic-contaminated drinking water may lead to various diseases, including cancer, hyperkeratosis, and liver and cardiovascular disorders.¹⁰⁵ Guo *et al.* developed a Fe/Zr-MOFs for the effective decontamination of arsenic in water. The adsorption capacities of BMOF for arsenate [As(v)] and arsenite [As(III)] reached 204.1 mg g⁻¹ and 101.7 mg g⁻¹, respectively. Additionally, the material effectively removed arsenic from real water samples (1.0 mg L⁻¹) within 2 hours, achieving removal efficiencies of 99.0% for As(III) and 99.8% for As(v).⁸² In addition, Fang *et al.* synthesized magnetic Zn/Co-MOFs incorporating both catalytic and adsorption functionalities. These MOFs were combined with PMS to enable the simultaneous oxidation of As(III) and adsorption of the resulting As(v). The PMS notably enhanced the initial adsorption rates rising from 31.19 to 358.96 μg g⁻¹ min⁻¹ for As(III), and from 354.12 to 497.85 μg g⁻¹ min⁻¹ for As(v).⁸³

Furthermore, Han *et al.* successfully synthesized bimetallic La-Zr MOFs through a simple fabrication method. The resulting material was applied as an adsorbent for the removal of



Table 1 An overview of the key information on the BMOFs discussed in this review. The Table is sorted according to metal ions, followed by the chemical formula of the BMOFs used, adsorption capacity, pH, temperature, performance

Metal	BMOF	Adsorption capacity (mg g ⁻¹)	Optimal pH	Temperature (K)	Performance %	Ref.
As	Fe/Al-BDC-NH ₂	146.8	5–9	298	—	71
As (III,V)	UiO-66(Fe/Zr)	101.7, 204.1	7	298	99, 99.8	82
As(III,V)	Zn/Co-MOF	1.242, 2.063	5	298	—	83
As(III,V)	Fe/Mn-MOF	344.14, 228.79	11	—	77.99, 99.59	84
As(v), Cr	La/Zr-MOF	83.40, 222.5	2	298	—	85
As(III)	Co/Mn MOF	531	11	—	93.4	86
As(III)	Fe/Mn-MOF	152.5	7	—	—	87
Hg	Ti/Zr-TA	583.5, 615.4 and 654.4	5	298–318	—	79
Hg	Cu/Ni-BTC	144.32	5	298	—	88
Hg	Zn/Ni-MOF	744.4	4	—	99.99	78
U	Cu/Fe-BTC	354	7	—	—	89
U	Ce/Mn-MOF	1218.78	6.5	313	88.6	90
U	Mg/Mn-MOF	113.9	4	298	93.88	91
Cu	Ni/Co-MOF	233.99	5	298	—	92
Cd, Cu	Ag/Fe-MOF	265, 213	5	298	—	93
Cr	Cu@MIL-53(Fe)	724.6	3	298	99.05	94
Cr(vi)	Ce-UiO-66-NH ₂ @LS	282.77	2	—	94.90	95
Cr	Fe/Zr-MOF	75.55	5	303	91.56	96
Cr	(Fe/Co)-BDC	588.23	5.3	—	—	97
Cr	Zr/Ce-UiO-67	—	1	—	93	98
Cr	Fe/Cu-BDC	—	3	—	98	99
Cu, Cr, U	Ni/Co-MOF	756.82	5.6	—	—	18
		111.22				
		365.25				
Pb	Fe doped HKUST-1	565	5	—	90	100
Pb	Zr/Ce MOF	667.04	6	298	—	101
Co	Co/Ni-MOF	372.66	6	—	—	102
Pb, Cd	Co/Fe-MOF	193.4, 182.2	5,7	298	—	103
Pb(II), Cu(II) and Cd(II)	Fe/Mg-MOF	140.6, 95.56, 134.4	5,7	—	—	39
Se(IV), (VI)	UiO-66(Fe/Zr)	196 mg g ⁻¹ , 258 mg g ⁻¹	5	298–318	—	104

Cr(vi) and As(v). The maximum monolayer adsorption capacity for H₃AsO₄ was 83.40 mg g⁻¹, primarily due to ligand exchange and coordination interactions involving La–OH and Zr–OH groups. Moreover, the sample labeled ₁LaUN₁₂ demonstrated excellent Cr(vi) adsorption performance, achieving a maximum monolayer capacity of 222.5 mg g⁻¹. Notably, over 40% of the adsorbed Cr(vi) was reduced to Cr(III) by amino functional groups and subsequently immobilized on the surface of ₁LaUN₁₂.⁸⁵ Additionally, Yang *et al.* synthesized Fe/Mn bimetallic MOF materials, which demonstrated outstanding adsorption performance for As(v) and As(III), with maximum theoretical q_m of 228.79 mg g⁻¹, and 344.14 mg g⁻¹, respectively.⁸⁴ Lastly, Zhang *et al.* designed an FeMn-MOF-74 adsorbent that provided combined adsorption and oxidation sites, creating a synergistic effect for the removal of As(III). It achieved the highest experimental q_m (161.6 mg g⁻¹) reported among MOF-based arsenic adsorbents.⁸⁷

4.2 Chromium removal

Chromium is extensively used in many manufacturing industries. Its compounds typically occur in two oxidation states: trivalent (Cr(III)) and hexavalent (Cr(vi)). Cr(vi) ions are highly soluble in the form of oxyanions, whereas Cr(III) ions tend to precipitate as Cr(OH)₃ and exhibit lower solubility.^{106,107} The hexavalent form is regarded as more toxic and hazardous than

the trivalent form because of its greater stability and carcinogenic nature.¹⁰⁸ Continuous accumulation of Cr⁶⁺ along the food chain may pose serious health risks, such as kidney damage, and gastric, dermatitis, lung cancer, eye and respiratory tract irritation, and can lead to biomagnification.¹⁰⁹ Yuan *et al.* successfully synthesized a novel Cu/Fe-MOF material and applied it for Cr(vi) removal. The Cr(vi) removal q_m were 20.65 mg g⁻¹ at 180 minutes and 13.35 mg g⁻¹ at 15 minutes. At 25 °C, 45.55% of total chromium and 99.05% of Cr(vi) were removed, with a q_m of 724.6 mg g⁻¹.⁹⁴ Similarly, Koppula *et al.* impregnated MnO₂ particles into a NiCo(BDC) BMOF to synthesize a highly stable NiCo(BDC)@MnO₂ composite. This material was used for the removal of Cu(II), Cr(vi), and U(vi) metal ions. The NiCo(BDC)@MnO₂ composite demonstrated high q_m of 756.82 mg g⁻¹ for Cu(II), 365.25 mg g⁻¹ for U(vi), and 111.22 mg g⁻¹ for Cr(vi).¹⁸

In another study, Wang *et al.* fabricated a Ce-UiO-66-NH₂@LS composite that proved effective for the removal of both methyl orange and Cr(vi). Under acidic conditions, the q_m for Cr(vi) reached 282.77 mg g⁻¹, with a removal efficiency of 94.90%. The material maintained over 80% removal efficiency after four consecutive reuse cycles.⁹⁵ Furthermore, Zhao *et al.* synthesized Fe/Zr-MOFs for the effective removal of Cr(vi) ions from wastewater. Optimal removal performance was achieved at pH 5, with an initial Cr(vi) concentration of 20 mg L⁻¹ at 303 K.



The Fe/Zr-MOFs exhibited a removal efficiency of up to 82% even after five consecutive reuse cycles, demonstrating their stability and reusability in repeated adsorption processes.⁹⁶ Abuzalat *et al.* synthesized (Fe/Co)-BDC using a simple solvothermal method. Its anion exchange adsorption capacity was evaluated against chromium oxyanions, which are recognized as hazardous pollutants. The material exhibited a remarkable q_m of 588 mg g⁻¹ for Cr-oxyanions.⁹⁷ Lastly, Yu *et al.* synthesized a bimetallic UiO-66(Zr/Al) material, UZA-6, which demonstrated outstanding photocatalytic performance by removing 99.25% of hexavalent chromium (Cr(vi)) from water. Furthermore, the catalyst efficiently adsorbed the resulting trivalent chromium (Cr(III)), sustaining a removal efficiency of 97.73% and thereby ensuring the complete elimination of chromium from the solution.¹¹⁰

4.3 Mercury removal

Mercury is a highly toxic metal that bioaccumulates in living organisms and poses significant risks to human health. It primarily originates from industrial and household sources.^{111,112} Methylmercury, in particular, can lead to neurological, genetic, pulmonary, and renal disorders, especially in children.¹¹³ Sokhansanj *et al.* synthesized CuNi-BTC@Fe₃O₄ for mercury removal, achieving a q_m of 144.32 mg g⁻¹, which fit well with the equilibrium data.⁸⁸ In addition, Zhang *et al.* synthesized FeCu-MOFs enriched with chlorine and applied them for the removal of elemental mercury (Hg⁰). The findings indicated that the FeCu-MOFs exhibited good crystallinity and uniform elemental distribution. These bimetallic MOFs achieved high Hg⁰ removal efficiencies, exceeding 90% under various conditions. The presence of O₂, HCl, and NO in the flue gas further enhanced the mercury removal efficiency. In addition, the FeCu-MOFs demonstrated strong resistance to water vapor and SO₂ poisoning. Adsorption kinetics analysis showed that the equilibrium mercury q_m reached 12.27 mg g⁻¹ at 393 K.¹¹⁴

4.4 Uranium removal

Uranium pollution has become a growing concern with the rapid expansion of nuclear power. When uranium enters the environment, it poses significant ecological risks. As a result, uranium-contaminated wastewater requires effective treatment.¹¹⁵ At the same time, recovering uranium from wastewater would be highly beneficial to the nuclear industry. Uranium, characterized by its radioactivity, chemical toxicity, and non-degradability, poses significant risks to both human health and the ecological environment.¹¹⁶ Liu *et al.* designed and synthesized two MOF materials, Cu-BTC and Cu/Fe-BTC, for the adsorption of U(vi). The optimum pH for Cu-BTC was 3.0, and at this pH, the q_m for U(vi), was 617 mg g⁻¹. For Cu/Fe-BTC, the optimal pH was 7.0, with a q_m of 354 mg g⁻¹ at this pH.⁸⁹ Similarly, Li *et al.* developed a novel bimetallic Ce/Mn-modified aminated MOF, which demonstrated excellent performance as an adsorbent for radioactive decontamination. The material exhibited a maximum U(vi) q_m of 1218.78 mg g⁻¹ at 313 K. Notably, after five adsorption-desorption cycles, the removal efficiency remained above 83.5%.⁹⁰ Lastly, Hassanin *et al.*

developed bimetallic Mg/Mn-based MOFs for uranium adsorption. The highest q_m , approximately 113.90 mg g⁻¹, was achieved at pH 4.0 after 60 minutes.⁹¹

4.5 Copper removal

Copper pollution originates from various industrial activities, including mining, metal plating, fiber production, and electronics manufacturing, as well as from agricultural practices and contaminated food or packaging materials. Exposure to copper poses significant health risks, including neurotoxicity (*e.g.*, Wilson's disease), kidney damage, liver disorders, and a potentially increased risk of lung cancer due to prolonged inhalation of copper-containing sprays.^{117,118} Kong *et al.* developed MOFs-CMC composites, including Ni/Co-MOF, Ni-MOF, and Co-MOF. The adsorption behavior of these composites toward Cu²⁺ was investigated through batch adsorption experiments, adsorption kinetics, and isotherm studies. The q_m followed the order: Co-MOF (214.38 mg g⁻¹), Ni/Co-MOF (233.99 mg g⁻¹), and Ni-MOF (216.95 mg g⁻¹), indicating a synergistic effect between Ni and Co that enhanced Cu²⁺ adsorption.⁹² Similarly, El-Yazeed *et al.* successfully synthesized a Ag/Fe-MOF, which showed outstanding q_m for Cd(II) and Cu(II), reaching 265 mg g⁻¹ and 213 mg g⁻¹, respectively. Among the tested MOFs, the Ag-Fe (0.6 : 1) framework exhibited superior adsorption performance.⁹³

4.6 Lead removal

Lead is one of the most acutely toxic heavy metals. Even very low concentrations of lead ions in drinking water can cause diseases such as hepatitis, encephalopathy, high blood pressure, miscarriage, kidney damage, and impaired brain and central nervous system function in unborn children when it crosses the placenta.^{119,120} Goyal *et al.* investigated the impact of iron doping on the hydrostability and adsorption behavior of HKUST-1 MOFs. Due to their high surface area, microporosity, and coordinatively unsaturated metal sites, the Fe-doped HKUST-1 exhibited remarkable selectivity and adsorption capacity for Pb(II), achieving over 90% removal efficiency and a q_m of 565 mg g⁻¹.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, Dahui An *et al.* investigated Zr/Ce MOF for the removal of Pb(II) from aqueous solutions, achieving a q_m of 667.04 mg g⁻¹ at pH 6 and 298 K.¹⁰¹ Lastly, Li *et al.* investigated both Ni-MOF and Ni/Cd-MOF materials. The bimetallic Ni/Cd-MOF, compared to the monometallic Ni-MOF, featured fewer layers, a larger specific surface area, greater pore size, and higher surface electronegativity. These properties contributed to its outstanding performance in Pb²⁺ removal, with a significantly higher adsorption rate, stronger affinity, and a superior q_m of 950.61 mg g⁻¹ nearly double that of Ni-MOF.⁷⁰

4.7 Other heavy metal removal

In addition to the aforementioned metals, the removal of other heavy metals such as cadmium (Cd), cobalt (Co), selenium (Se), and various combinations of multiple heavy metals has also been extensively investigated. The key findings including removal efficiencies, conditions, and BMOF types are comprehensively summarized in Table 1. Alshorifi *et al.* developed (Fe/



Co) bimetallic MOF catalysts that effectively removed toxic metal ions (Hg^{2+} , Pb^{2+} , Cd^{2+} , and Cu^{2+}) from aqueous solutions, exhibiting high adsorption capacities. The maximum removal efficiencies were 95.98% for lead, 98.89% for mercury, 93.89% for cadmium, and 92.6% for copper ions.¹²¹ In addition, Sen-gupta *et al.* developed Zr/Zn bimetallic MOFs, with Zr–Zn–MOF-1 showing the q_m of 77.4% within 3 hours at pH 5. They also investigated how pH influenced the surface charge of the MOFs to better understand the relationship between pH and sorption performance. The q_m reached 129.0 mg g^{-1} .¹²² Furthermore, Mazlan *et al.* studied rGO-PDA/Co-ZIF-8 aerogels, which demonstrated an exceptionally high q_m of 1217 mg g^{-1} for lead, with a removal efficiency exceeding 99%. The material also exhibited excellent adsorption performance for other heavy metals, achieving q_m of 1163 mg g^{-1} for copper and 1059 mg g^{-1} for cadmium. Notably, the lead adsorption capacity remained stable at 1023 mg g^{-1} with a removal efficiency above 80% even after seven cycles at pH 6.¹²³ Lastly, Shen *et al.* reported that the adsorption capacities of CdK-*m*-COTTTB reached 636.94 mg g^{-1} for Pb^{2+} , 432.90 mg g^{-1} for Tb^{3+} , and 357.14 mg g^{-1} for Zr^{4+} ions.¹²⁴

5. Challenges and future perspectives

It highlights the unique structural and chemical properties of BMOFs, such as tunable porosity, large surface areas, and synergistic effects of dual metals, which enhance adsorption performance for heavy metal removal. The review elucidates the mechanisms of heavy metal adsorption, including physisorption, chemisorption (such as coordination bonds, electrostatic interactions, ion-exchange mechanisms, and coprecipitation). It identifies design strategies for BMOFs, including the choice of metal combinations, ligands, and synthesis methods, to optimize their performance for removing different metals.

By summarizing the latest advances and challenges, the review opens avenues for developing multifunctional, cost-effective, and scalable BMOFs for environmental remediation. While previous studies have explored monometallic MOFs for heavy metal removal, no comprehensive review has systematically addressed the unique advantages of BMOFs for this purpose. Many prior studies focus on individual case studies or single-metal frameworks, whereas this review integrates these findings, identifies knowledge gaps, and provides a holistic perspective on the potential of BMOFs for heavy metal remediation. Therefore, the insights provided here are novel and not fully captured in the earlier literature.

Despite the promising performance of BMOFs in removing toxic heavy metals from aquatic environments, several challenges remain that must be addressed to advance their practical application. One major limitation is the stability of BMOFs in aqueous and chemically harsh environments, where structural degradation can hinder both adsorption efficiency and recyclability. Additionally, large-scale synthesis of BMOFs with consistent quality, controlled composition, and uniform porosity presents both technical and economic challenges. Issues such as potential leaching of metal ions, high production

costs, and limited regeneration cycles further restrict their implementation in real-world wastewater treatment systems.

Moreover, the adsorption mechanisms at the molecular level are not yet fully understood, particularly the synergistic interactions between the two metal centers and their roles in the selective binding of heavy metal ions. Comprehensive studies integrating advanced characterization techniques and theoretical modeling are needed to elucidate these complex interactions. Environmental compatibility, toxicity assessments, and long-term performance evaluations are also critical for ensuring the safe deployment of BMOFs in natural ecosystems.

Looking ahead, future research should prioritize improving the chemical and structural stability of BMOFs under diverse environmental conditions, developing green and cost-effective synthesis routes, and enhancing selectivity and reusability through surface modification or functionalization. The integration of BMOFs into composite materials, membranes, or hybrid systems may also pave the way for scalable and multifunctional water purification technologies. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration spanning materials science, environmental engineering, and computational chemistry will be essential for accelerating innovation and translating laboratory-scale advances into industrial-scale solutions for sustainable heavy metal remediation.

6. Conclusion

BMOFs have emerged as highly efficient and versatile adsorbents for the removal of toxic heavy metals from aqueous environments. By integrating two different metal nodes, BMOFs exhibit enhanced structural stability, tunable porosity, abundant active sites, and synergistic effects that significantly improve adsorption capacity and selectivity compared to their monometallic counterparts. Heavy metal removal occurs primarily through physisorption or chemisorption interactions between metal ions and the active sites within the BMOF structure.

Despite their remarkable potential, challenges remain in scaling up production, improving long-term stability under harsh environmental conditions, and ensuring cost-effective regeneration. Future research should focus on developing eco-friendly synthesis methods, exploring novel metal combinations, and integrating BMOFs into continuous treatment systems to bridge the gap between laboratory studies and large-scale applications. Overall, BMOFs represent a promising next-generation platform for sustainable and high-performance heavy metal adsorption and environmental remediation.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.



References

- 1 S. A. Razzak, M. O. Faruque, Z. Alsheikh, L. Alsheikhmohamad, D. Alkuroud, A. Alfayez, *et al.*, A comprehensive review on conventional and biological-driven heavy metals removal from industrial wastewater, *Environ. Adv.*, 2022, 7, 100168. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666765722000047>.
- 2 A. Azimi, A. Azari, M. Rezakazemi and M. Ansarpour, Removal of heavy metals from industrial wastewaters: a review, *ChemBioEng Rev.*, 2017, 4(1), 37–59.
- 3 K. F. Kayani, S. J. Mohammed, M. S. Mustafa and S. B. Aziz, Dyes and their toxicity: removal from wastewater using carbon dots/metal oxides as hybrid materials: a review, *Mater. Adv.*, 2025, 6, 5391–5409, DOI: [10.1039/D5MA00572H](https://doi.org/10.1039/D5MA00572H).
- 4 M. K. Anser, I. Hanif, X. V. Vo and M. Alharthi, The long-run and short-run influence of environmental pollution, energy consumption, and economic activities on health quality in emerging countries, *Environ. Sci. Pollut. Res.*, 2020, 27(26), 32518–32532.
- 5 K. Yin, Q. Wang, M. Lv and L. Chen, Microorganism remediation strategies towards heavy metals, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2019, 360, 1553–1563.
- 6 J. Wang and C. Chen, Biosorbents for heavy metals removal and their future, *Biotechnol. Adv.*, 2009, 27(2), 195–226. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0734975008001109>.
- 7 S. Mitra, A. J. Chakraborty, A. M. Tareq, T. B. Emran, F. Nainu, A. Khusro, *et al.*, Impact of heavy metals on the environment and human health: Novel therapeutic insights to counter the toxicity, *J. King Saud Univ., Sci.*, 2022, 34(3), 101865. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1018364722000465>.
- 8 H. Ali, E. Khan and I. Ilahi, Environmental chemistry and ecotoxicology of hazardous heavy metals: environmental persistence, toxicity, and bioaccumulation, *J. Chem.*, 2019, 2019(1), 6730305.
- 9 A. F. Tumanyan, A. P. Seliverstova and N. A. Zaitseva, Effect of heavy metals on ecosystems, *Chem. Technol. Fuels Oils*, 2020, 56(3), 390–394.
- 10 M. Mokarram, A. Saber and V. Sheykhi, Effects of heavy metal contamination on river water quality due to release of industrial effluents, *J. Cleaner Prod.*, 2020, 277, 123380.
- 11 R. M. Ali, H. A. Hamad, M. M. Hussein and G. F. Malash, Potential of using green adsorbent of heavy metal removal from aqueous solutions: adsorption kinetics, isotherm, thermodynamic, mechanism and economic analysis, *Ecol. Eng.*, 2016, 91, 317–332.
- 12 A. Dąbrowski, Z. Hubicki, P. Podkościelny and E. Robens, Selective removal of the heavy metal ions from waters and industrial wastewaters by ion-exchange method, *Chemosphere*, 2004, 56(2), 91–106.
- 13 J. E. Efome, D. Rana, T. Matsuura and C. Q. Lan, Effects of operating parameters and coexisting ions on the efficiency of heavy metal ions removal by nano-fibrous metal-organic framework membrane filtration process, *Sci. Total Environ.*, 2019, 674, 355–362.
- 14 Q. Chen, Y. Yao, X. Li, J. Lu, J. Zhou and Z. Huang, Comparison of heavy metal removals from aqueous solutions by chemical precipitation and characteristics of precipitates, *J. Water Process Eng.*, 2018, 26, 289–300.
- 15 T.-K. Tran, K.-F. Chiu, C.-Y. Lin and H.-J. Leu, Electrochemical treatment of wastewater: Selectivity of the heavy metals removal process, *Int. J. Hydrogen Energy*, 2017, 42(45), 27741–27748.
- 16 B. Pan, B. Pan, W. Zhang, L. Lv, Q. Zhang and S. Zheng, Development of polymeric and polymer-based hybrid adsorbents for pollutants removal from waters, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2009, 151(1–3), 19–29.
- 17 H. R. Ahmed, K. F. Kayani, A. M. Ealias and K. H. H. Aziz, A Comprehensive Review of Forty Adsorption Isotherm Models: An In-depth Analysis of Ten Statistical Error Measures, *Water, Air, Soil Pollut.*, 2025, 236(6), 346, DOI: [10.1007/s11270-025-07982-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11270-025-07982-4).
- 18 S. Koppula, P. Jagasia, M. K. Panchangam and S. B. Manabolu Surya, Synthesis of bimetallic Metal-Organic Frameworks composite for the removal of Copper(II), Chromium(VI), and Uranium(VI) from the aqueous solution using fixed-bed column adsorption, *J. Solid State Chem.*, 2022, 312, 123168. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022459622002936>.
- 19 R. J. Kuppler, D. J. Timmons, Q.-R. Fang, J.-R. Li, T. A. Makal, M. D. Young, *et al.*, Potential applications of metal-organic frameworks, *Coord. Chem. Rev.*, 2009, 253(23–24), 3042–3066.
- 20 K. F. Kayani, N. N. Mohammad, D. A. Kader, S. J. Mohammed, D. A. Shukur, A. H. Alshatteri, *et al.*, Ratiometric Lanthanide Metal-Organic Frameworks (MOFs) for Smartphone-Assisted Visual Detection of Food Contaminants and Water: A Review, *ChemistrySelect*, 2023, 8(47), e202303472, DOI: [10.1002/slct.202303472](https://doi.org/10.1002/slct.202303472).
- 21 K. F. Kayani and K. M. Omer, A red luminescent europium metal organic framework (Eu-MOF) integrated with a paper strip using smartphone visual detection for determination of folic acid in pharmaceutical formulations, *New J. Chem.*, 2022, 46(17), 8152–8161, DOI: [10.1039/D2NJ00601D](https://doi.org/10.1039/D2NJ00601D).
- 22 Y.-B. Huang, J. Liang, X.-S. Wang and R. Cao, Multifunctional metal-organic framework catalysts: synergistic catalysis and tandem reactions, *Chem. Soc. Rev.*, 2017, 46(1), 126–157.
- 23 X. Zhao, Y. Wang, D. Li, X. Bu and P. Feng, Metal-organic frameworks for separation, *Adv. Mater.*, 2018, 30(37), 1705189.
- 24 X. Fang, B. Zong and S. Mao, Metal-organic framework-based sensors for environmental contaminant sensing, *Nano-Micro Lett.*, 2018, 10, 1–19.
- 25 H. D. Lawson, S. P. Walton and C. Chan, Metal-organic frameworks for drug delivery: a design perspective, *ACS Appl. Mater. Interfaces*, 2021, 13(6), 7004–7020.



- 26 F. Yang, M. Du, K. Yin, Z. Qiu, J. Zhao, C. Liu, *et al.*, Applications of metal-organic frameworks in water treatment: a review, *Small*, 2022, **18**(11), 2105715.
- 27 H. Kaur, N. Devi, S. S. Siwal, W. F. Alsanie, M. K. Thakur and V. K. Thakur, Metal-Organic Framework-Based Materials for Wastewater Treatment: Superior Adsorbent Materials for the Removal of Hazardous Pollutants, *ACS Omega*, 2023, **8**(10), 9004–9030, DOI: [10.1021/acsomega.2c07719](https://doi.org/10.1021/acsomega.2c07719).
- 28 X. Zhang, Z. Zhai, X. Feng, H. Hou and Y. Zhang, Recent Advances of Metal-Organic Framework for Heavy Metal Ions Adsorption, *Langmuir*, 2024, **40**(34), 17868–17888, DOI: [10.1021/acs.langmuir.4c01757](https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.langmuir.4c01757).
- 29 A. S. M. Ghumman, R. Shamsuddin, L. Qomariyah, J. W. Lim, A. Sami and M. Ayoub, Heavy metal sequestration from wastewater by metal-organic frameworks: a state-of-the-art review of recent progress, *Environ. Sci. Pollut. Res.*, 2025, **32**(32), 19253–19275, DOI: [10.1007/s11356-024-33317-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-024-33317-7).
- 30 S. Essalmi, S. Lotfi, A. BaQais, M. Saadi, M. Arab and H. Ait Ahsaine, Design and application of metal organic frameworks for heavy metals adsorption in water: a review, *RSC Adv.*, 2024, **14**(13), 9365–9390, DOI: [10.1039/D3RA08815D](https://doi.org/10.1039/D3RA08815D).
- 31 F. Ayesh Alharthi, A. A. Abutaleb, M. M. Aljohani and M. Alshareef, Recent progress in metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) for the detection and removal of heavy metal ions from water: A comprehensive review, *Comments Inorg. Chem.*, 2025, **45**(3), 245–282.
- 32 Y. Qin, N. Singh, S. Singh, V. Singh, V. Mishra and S. Li, Metal organic framework for sustainable removal of heavy metals contamination from wastewater: a review, *Green Chem. Lett. Rev.*, 2025, **18**(1), 2545418.
- 33 Y. Zhao, Z. Song, X. Li, Q. Sun, N. Cheng, S. Lawes, *et al.*, Metal organic frameworks for energy storage and conversion, *Energy Storage Mater.*, 2016, **2**, 35–62.
- 34 N. A. Khan, Z. Hasan and S. H. Jhung, Adsorptive removal of hazardous materials using metal-organic frameworks (MOFs): a review, *J. Hazard. Mater.*, 2013, **244**, 444–456.
- 35 B. N. Bhadra, A. Vinu, C. Serre and S. H. Jhung, MOF-derived carbonaceous materials enriched with nitrogen: Preparation and applications in adsorption and catalysis, *Mater. Today*, 2019, **25**, 88–111.
- 36 P. Ragui, A. Yadav, S. Goyal, S. Rani, V. K. Goel and R. K. Sharma, Bimetallic MOFs for the effective removal of organic contaminants: Dyes and antibiotics, *Colloids Surf. C: Environ. Asp.*, 2025, **3**, 100070. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2949759025000174>.
- 37 H. Shayegan, G. A. M. Ali and V. Safarifard, Recent progress in the removal of heavy metal ions from water using metal-organic frameworks, *ChemistrySelect*, 2020, **5**(1), 124–146.
- 38 S.-W. Lv, J.-M. Liu, C.-Y. Li, N. Zhao, Z.-H. Wang and S. Wang, A novel and universal metal-organic frameworks sensing platform for selective detection and efficient removal of heavy metal ions, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2019, **375**, 122111.
- 39 W. S. A. El-Yazeed, Y. G. Abou El-Reash, L. A. Elatwy and A. I. Ahmed, Facile fabrication of bimetallic Fe–Mg MOF for the synthesis of xanthenes and removal of heavy metal ions, *RSC Adv.*, 2020, **10**(16), 9693–9703.
- 40 K. F. Kayani, Removal of pharmaceutical residues from aquatic systems using bimetallic metal-organic frameworks (BMOFs): a critical review, *RSC Adv.*, 2025, **15**(25), 20168–20182, DOI: [10.1039/D5RA03056K](https://doi.org/10.1039/D5RA03056K).
- 41 K. F. Kayani, Bimetallic metal-organic frameworks (BMOFs) for dye removal: a review, *RSC Adv.*, 2024, **14**(43), 31777–31796, DOI: [10.1039/D4RA06626J](https://doi.org/10.1039/D4RA06626J).
- 42 K. F. Kayani, Nanozyme based on bimetallic metal-organic frameworks and their applications: A review, *Microchem. J.*, 2025, **208**, 112363. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0026265X24024767>.
- 43 A. A. Aryee, Y. Liu, R. Han and L. Qu, Bimetallic adsorbents for wastewater treatment: a review, *Environ. Chem. Lett.*, 2023, **21**(3), 1811–1835, DOI: [10.1007/s10311-023-01566-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10311-023-01566-6).
- 44 H. I. Adil, M. R. Thalji, S. A. Yasin, I. A. Saeed, M. A. Assiri, K. F. Chong, *et al.*, Metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) based nanofiber architectures for the removal of heavy metal ions, *RSC Adv.*, 2022, **12**(3), 1433–1450.
- 45 A. S. Mubarak, S. S. Salih, M. Kadhom and T. K. Ghosh, Removal of heavy metals from contaminated water using Metal-Organic Frameworks (MOFs): A review on techniques and applications, *Mater. Sci. Eng., B*, 2025, **315**, 118105.
- 46 F. Yuan, D. Yan, S. Song, J. Zhang, Y. Yang, Z. Chen, *et al.*, Removal of heavy metals from water by adsorption on metal organic frameworks: Research progress and mechanistic analysis in the last decade, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2025, 160063.
- 47 G. Lin, B. Zeng, J. Li, Z. Wang, S. Wang, T. Hu, *et al.*, A systematic review of metal organic frameworks materials for heavy metal removal: Synthesis, applications and mechanism, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2023, **460**, 141710. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1385894723004412>.
- 48 P. A. Kobielska, A. J. Howarth, O. K. Farha and S. Nayak, Metal-organic frameworks for heavy metal removal from water, *Coord. Chem. Rev.*, 2018, **358**, 92–107.
- 49 J. Briffa, E. Sinagra and R. Blundell, Heavy metal pollution in the environment and their toxicological effects on humans, *Heliyon*, 2020, **6**(9), e04691.
- 50 J. Liu, J. Wang, T. Xiao, Z. Bao, H. Lippold, X. Luo, *et al.*, Geochemical dispersal of thallium and accompanying metals in sediment profiles from a smelter-impacted area in South China, *Appl. Geochem.*, 2018, **88**, 239–246.
- 51 T. E. Oladimeji, M. Oyedemi, M. E. Emeteri, O. Agboola, J. B. Adeoye and O. A. Odunlami, Review on the impact of heavy metals from industrial wastewater effluent and removal technologies, *Heliyon*, 2024, **10**(23), e40370. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844024164018>.
- 52 A. S. Mohammed and R. Goel, Heavy metal pollution: source, impact, and remedies, *Bio-management of metal-contaminated soils*, 2011, pp. 1–28.



- 53 P. B. Angon, M. S. Islam, S. Kc, A. Das, N. Anjum, A. Poudel, *et al.*, Sources, effects and present perspectives of heavy metals contamination: Soil, plants and human food chain, *Heliyon*, 2024, **10**(7), e28357.
- 54 P. Saravanan, V. Saravanan, R. Rajeshkannan, G. Arnica, M. Rajasimman, G. Baskar, *et al.*, Comprehensive review on toxic heavy metals in the aquatic system: sources, identification, treatment strategies, and health risk assessment, *Environ. Res.*, 2024, **258**, 119440. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0013935124013458>.
- 55 M. Balali-Mood, K. Naseri, Z. Tahergorabi, M. R. Khazdair and M. Sadeghi, Toxic mechanisms of five heavy metals: mercury, lead, chromium, cadmium, and arsenic, *Front. Pharmacol.*, 2021, **12**, 643972.
- 56 M. Naz, Z. Dai, S. Hussain, M. Tariq, S. Danish, I. U. Khan, *et al.*, The soil pH and heavy metals revealed their impact on soil microbial community, *J. Environ. Manage.*, 2022, **321**, 115770.
- 57 K. E. Giller, E. Witter and S. P. McGrath, Heavy metals and soil microbes, *Soil Biol. Biochem.*, 2009, **41**(10), 2031–2037. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0038071709001813>.
- 58 F. Jamil Emon, M. F. Rohani, N. Sumaiya, M. F. Tuj Jannat, Y. Akter, M. Shahjahan, *et al.*, Bioaccumulation and bioremediation of heavy metals in fishes—a review, *Toxics*, 2023, **11**(6), 510.
- 59 H. Ali, E. Khan and M. A. Sajad, Phytoremediation of heavy metals—Concepts and applications, *Chemosphere*, 2013, **91**(7), 869–881. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0045653513001914>.
- 60 L. Rani, J. Kaushal, A. L. Srivastav and P. Mahajan, A critical review on recent developments in MOF adsorbents for the elimination of toxic heavy metals from aqueous solutions, *Environ. Sci. Pollut. Res.*, 2020, **27**, 44771–44796.
- 61 H. O. C. S. Al and S. A. Ali, Removal of heavy metal ions using a novel cross-linked polyzwitterionic phosphonate, *Sep. Purif. Technol.*, 2012, **98**, 94–101. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1383586612004029>.
- 62 B. Van de Voorde, B. Bueken, J. Denayer and D. De Vos, Adsorptive separation on metal–organic frameworks in the liquid phase, *Chem. Soc. Rev.*, 2014, **43**(16), 5766–5788, DOI: [10.1039/C4CS00066D](https://doi.org/10.1039/C4CS00066D).
- 63 Y. Chen and S. Ma, Biomimetic catalysis of metal–organic frameworks, *Dalton Trans.*, 2016, **45**(24), 9744–9753.
- 64 L. Chen, X. Zhang, X. Cheng, Z. Xie, Q. Kuang and L. Zheng, The function of metal–organic frameworks in the application of MOF-based composites, *Nanoscale Adv.*, 2020, **2**(7), 2628–2647.
- 65 Y. Zhou, Q. Yang, D. Zhang, N. Gan, Q. Li and J. Cuan, Detection and removal of antibiotic tetracycline in water with a highly stable luminescent MOF, *Sens. Actuators, B*, 2018, **262**, 137–143, DOI: [10.1016/j.snb.2018.01.218](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.snb.2018.01.218).
- 66 S. Yu, H. Pang, S. Huang, H. Tang, S. Wang, M. Qiu, *et al.*, Recent advances in metal–organic framework membranes for water treatment: A review, *Sci. Total Environ.*, 2021, **800**, 149662, DOI: [10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.149662](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.149662).
- 67 X. Yang and Q. Xu, Bimetallic metal–organic frameworks for gas storage and separation, *Cryst. Growth Des.*, 2017, **17**(4), 1450–1455.
- 68 L. Chen, H.-F. Wang, C. Li and Q. Xu, Bimetallic metal–organic frameworks and their derivatives, *Chem. Sci.*, 2020, **11**(21), 5369–5403.
- 69 A. Kumari, S. Kaushal and P. P. Singh, Bimetallic metal–organic frameworks heterogeneous catalysts: Design, construction, and applications, *Mater. Today Energy*, 2021, **20**, 100667.
- 70 G. Li, Y. Liu, Y. Shen, Q. Fang and F. Liu, Bimetallic coordination in two-dimensional metal–organic framework nanosheets enables highly efficient removal of heavy metal lead (II), *Front. Chem. Eng. China*, 2021, **3**, 636439.
- 71 C. Yin, S. Li, L. Liu, Q. Huang, G. Zhu, X. Yang, *et al.*, Structure-tunable trivalent Fe–Al-based bimetallic organic frameworks for arsenic removal from contaminated water, *J. Mol. Liq.*, 2022, **346**, 117101.
- 72 N. Raza, T. Kumar, V. Singh and K.-H. Kim, Recent advances in bimetallic metal–organic framework as a potential candidate for supercapacitor electrode material, *Coord. Chem. Rev.*, 2021, **430**, 213660.
- 73 I. Saini, V. Singh and S. Hamad, Recent development in bimetallic metal–organic frameworks as photocatalytic material, *Inorg. Chem. Commun.*, 2023, 111897.
- 74 A. Gil, Classical and new insights into the methodology for characterizing adsorbents and metal catalysts by chemical adsorption, *Catal. Today*, 2023, **423**, 114016.
- 75 K. F. Kayani, D. S. Hamad, N. N. Mohammad, S. J. Mohammed, H. R. Ahmed and M. A. Salih, Uses, toxicity, and removal of fuchsin dye from wastewater using low-cost adsorbents, *Desalin. Water Treat.*, 2025, **323**, 101395. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1944398625004114>.
- 76 M. Ahmaruzzaman, S. Roy, L. Khanikar, M. Sillanpää and S. Rtimi, Magnetic Nanocomposites as Emerging Paradigm for Mitigation of Arsenic from Aqueous Sources, *J. Inorg. Organomet. Polym. Mater.*, 2025, **35**(4), 2213–2244, DOI: [10.1007/s10904-024-03422-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10904-024-03422-8).
- 77 M. S. Adly, S. M. El-Dafrawy, A. A. Ibrahim, S. A. El-Hakam and M. S. El-Shall, Efficient removal of heavy metals from polluted water with high selectivity for Hg(II) and Pb(II) by a 2-imino-4-thiobiuret chemically modified MIL-125 metal–organic framework, *RSC Adv.*, 2021, **11**(23), 13940–13950, DOI: [10.1039/D1RA00927C](https://doi.org/10.1039/D1RA00927C).
- 78 J. Yu, X. Jiang, Z. Zhou, F. Li, Y. He, H. Bai, *et al.*, A novel mercapto-functionalized bimetallic Zn/Ni-MOF adsorbents for efficient removal of Hg(II) in wastewater, *J. Environ. Chem. Eng.*, 2024, **12**(4), 113258. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213343724013885>.
- 79 B. Zeng, G. Lin, J. Li, W. Wang and L. Zhang, Selective removal of mercury ions by functionalized Ti–Zr bimetallic coordination polymers, *Process Saf. Environ. Prot.*, 2022,



- 168, 123–132. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0957582022008448>.
- 80 T. Qi, Z. Yuan and F. Meng, Highly sensitive and highly selective lead ion electrochemical sensor based on zn/cu-btc-nh₂ bimetallic MOFs with nano-reticulated reinforcing microstructure, *Anal. Chim. Acta*, 2024, **1318**, 342896. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0003267024006974>.
- 81 Y. Verma, A. Verma, A. Bhaskaralingam, P. Dhiman, T. Wang, A. Kumar, *et al.*, Application of Zero-Valent Iron and Its Derivatives in the Removal of Toxic Metal Ions from Groundwater, *Water*, 2025, **17**(10), 1524.
- 82 Q. Guo, Y. Li, L.-W. Zheng, X.-Y. Wei, Y. Xu, Y.-W. Shen, *et al.*, Facile fabrication of Fe/Zr binary MOFs for arsenic removal in water: High capacity, fast kinetics and good reusability, *J. Environ. Sci.*, 2023, **128**, 213–223.
- 83 Y. Fang, B. Qian, Y. Yang, Y. Song, Z. Yang and H. Li, Purification of high-arsenic groundwater by magnetic bimetallic MOFs coupled with PMS: Balance of catalysis and adsorption and promotion mechanism of PMS, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2022, **432**, 134417.
- 84 Y. Yang, W. Mo, C. Wei, M. N. L. Islahah, Y. Huang, J. Yang, *et al.*, Fe/Mn-MOF-driven rapid arsenic decontamination: Mechanistic elucidation of adsorption processes and performance optimization, *J. Water Process Eng.*, 2025, **69**, 106691.
- 85 C. Han, J. Xie and X. Min, Efficient adsorption H₃AsO₄ and Cr (VI) from strongly acidic solutions by La-Zr bimetallic MOFs: Crystallinity role and mechanism, *J. Environ. Chem. Eng.*, 2022, **10**(6), 108982.
- 86 J. Feng, G. Zhi, X. Qi and M. Geng, Efficient Adsorption of Arsenic from Smelting Wastewater by CoMn-MOF-74 Bimetallic Composites, *Sustainability*, 2025, **17**(7), 3060.
- 87 T. Zhang, J. Wang, W. Zhang, C. Yang, L. Zhang, W. Zhu, *et al.*, Amorphous Fe/Mn bimetal-organic frameworks: outer and inner structural designs for efficient arsenic (iii) removal, *J. Mater. Chem. A*, 2019, **7**(6), 2845–2854.
- 88 A. Sokhansanj and M. Zabihi, Remarkable dynamic adsorption of Hg₂⁺ ions on the magnetic MOF nanocomposite (CuNi-BTC@ Fe₃O₄): experimental and modeling using GA+ CFD+ ANFIS method, *J. Cleaner Prod.*, 2022, **371**, 133304.
- 89 R. Liu, W. Zhang, Y. Chen and Y. Wang, Uranium (VI) adsorption by copper and copper/iron bimetallic central MOFs, *Colloids Surf., A*, 2020, **587**, 124334.
- 90 Z. Li, M. Zhou, S. Wang and B. Hu, Fabrication of amino-functionalized Ce/Mn bimetallic organic framework and its efficient performance on Uranium (VI) extraction in aqueous solutions, *Sep. Purif. Technol.*, 2024, **345**, 127217.
- 91 M. A. Hassanin, E. A. Allam, E. M. Allam, M. Y. Hanfi, A. K. Sakr, S. E. Adel, *et al.*, Uptake of uranium (VI) upon a novel developed nanocomposite of bimetallic Mg/Mn bentonite lupine peels, *J. Water Process Eng.*, 2024, **66**, 106009.
- 92 Q. Kong, H. Zhang, P. Wang, Y. Lan, W. Ma and X. Shi, NiCo bimetallic and the corresponding monometallic organic frameworks loaded CMC aerogels for adsorbing Cu₂⁺: adsorption behavior and mechanism, *Int. J. Biol. Macromol.*, 2023, **244**, 125169.
- 93 W. S. A. El-Yazeed, Y. G. Abou El-Reash, L. A. Elatwy and A. I. Ahmed, Novel bimetallic Ag-Fe MOF for exceptional Cd and Cu removal and 3, 4-dihydropyrimidinone synthesis, *J. Taiwan Inst. Chem. Eng.*, 2020, **114**, 199–210.
- 94 D. Yuan, C. Shang, J. Cui, W. Zhang and Y. Kou, Removal of Cr (VI) from aqueous solutions via simultaneous reduction and adsorption by modified bimetallic MOF-derived carbon material Cu@ MIL-53 (Fe): Performance, kinetics, and mechanism, *Environ. Res.*, 2023, **216**, 114616.
- 95 S. Wang, S. Tian, Y. He, B. Zheng, H. Xiong, L. Li, *et al.*, A novel bimetallic UiO-66 loofah sponge adsorbent prepared in situ for the efficient removal of methyl orange and Cr (VI): Batch experiments and DFT calculations, *Sep. Purif. Technol.*, 2025, **364**, 132353.
- 96 Y. Zhao, X. Zhang, W. Liu, M. Li, Y. Chen, Y. Yang, *et al.*, Simple synthesis, characterization and mechanism of Fe/Zr bimetallic-organic framework for Cr (VI) removal from wastewater, *J. Environ. Chem. Eng.*, 2024, **12**(2), 112040.
- 97 O. Abuzalat, H. Tantawy, M. Mokhtar and A. Baraka, Nanoporous bimetallic organic frameworks (Fe/Co)-BDC, a breathing MOF for rapid and capacitive removal of Cr-oxyanions from water, *J. Water Process Eng.*, 2022, **46**, 102537.
- 98 M. D. Goudarzi, M. B. Sabouti, N. Khosroshahi and V. Safarifard, One-step solvothermal synthesis of the bimetallic Zr/Ce-UiO-67 metal-organic framework: a visible-light-activated photocatalyst for Cr (vi) detoxification, *New J. Chem.*, 2023, **47**(15), 7335–7345.
- 99 M. E. Mahmoud, M. F. Amira, M. M. H. M. Azab and A. M. Abdelfattah, Inclusion of bimetallic Fe_{0.75}Cu_{0.25}-BDC MOFs into Alginate-MoO₃/GO as a novel nanohybrid for adsorptive removal of hexavalent chromium from water, *Sci. Rep.*, 2022, **12**(1), 19108.
- 100 P. Goyal, A. Paruthi, D. Menon, R. Behara, A. Jaiswal, A. Kumar, *et al.*, Fe doped bimetallic HKUST-1 MOF with enhanced water stability for trapping Pb (II) with high adsorption capacity, *Chem. Eng. J.*, 2022, **430**, 133088.
- 101 D. An, S. Jin, J. Zheng, M. Liao and L. Chen, Regulated dual defects of ligand defects and lattice defects in UiO-66 for ultra-trace simultaneous detection and removal of heavy metal ions, *Mater. Chem. Front.*, 2025, **9**(2), 308–317.
- 102 E. Moradi, M. M. Salehi and A. Maleki, Highly stable mesoporous Co/Ni mixed metal-organic framework [Co/Ni (μ₃-tp) 2 (μ₂-pyz) 2] for Co (II) heavy metal ions (HMIs) remediation, *Heliyon*, 2024, **10**(15), e35044.
- 103 M. A. Mannaa, M. R. Mlahi, M. A. Al, A. I. Ahmed and S. M. Hassan, Synthesis of Highly Efficient and Recyclable Bimetallic Co x-Fe_{1-x}-MOF for the Synthesis of Xanthan and Removal of Toxic Pb₂⁺ and Cd₂⁺ Ions, *ACS Omega*, 2023, **8**(29), 26379–26390.
- 104 Q. Guo, X.-P. Ma, L.-W. Zheng, C.-X. Zhao, X.-Y. Wei, Y. Xu, *et al.*, Exceptional removal and immobilization of selenium species by bimetal-organic frameworks, *Ecotoxicol. Environ. Saf.*, 2022, **245**, 114097.



- 105 X. Zhang, H. Fan, J. Yuan, J. Tian, Y. Wang, C. Lu, *et al.*, The application and mechanism of iron sulfides in arsenic removal from water and wastewater: A critical review, *J. Environ. Chem. Eng.*, 2022, **10**(6), 108856. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213343722017298>.
- 106 M. Gheju and I. Balcu, Removal of chromium from Cr(VI) polluted wastewaters by reduction with scrap iron and subsequent precipitation of resulted cations, *J. Hazard. Mater.*, 2011, **196**, 131–138. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304389411011022>.
- 107 K. F. Kayani, Phosphorus-doped carbon dots and their analytical and bioanalytical applications: a review, *Talanta*, 2026, **297**, 128768. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0039914025012597>.
- 108 R. Beksissa, B. Tekola, T. Ayala and B. Dame, Investigation of the adsorption performance of acid treated lignite coal for Cr (VI) removal from aqueous solution, *Environ. Challenges*, 2021, **4**, 100091. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667010021000706>.
- 109 A. Nagababu, D. S. Reddy and G. V. K. Mohan, Toxic chrome removal from industrial effluents using marine algae: Modeling and optimization, *J. Ind. Eng. Chem.*, 2022, **114**, 377–390. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1226086X22003914>.
- 110 C. Yu, C. Song, X. Zhang, Y. Wang, J. Lin, Y. Huang, *et al.*, Complete chromium removal via photocatalytic reduction and adsorption using bimetallic UiO-66(Zr/Al), *J. Environ. Chem. Eng.*, 2024, **12**(5), 113934. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213343724020657>.
- 111 K. F. Kayani and S. J. Mohammed, Mercury in aquatic environments: toxicity and advances in remediation using covalent organic frameworks, *Mater. Adv.*, 2025, **6**, 3371–3385, DOI: [10.1039/D5MA00208G](https://doi.org/10.1039/D5MA00208G).
- 112 K. F. Kayani, O. B. A. Shatery, S. J. Mohammed, S. B. Aziz, N. N. Mohammad, G. H. Abdullah, *et al.*, Fluorescent sulfur quantum dots for environmental monitoring, *Nanotechnol. Rev.*, 2025, **14**(1), 20240138.
- 113 A. K. Meena, G. K. Mishra, P. K. Rai, C. Rajagopal and P. N. Nagar, Removal of heavy metal ions from aqueous solutions using carbon aerogel as an adsorbent, *J. Hazard. Mater.*, 2005, **122**(1), 161–170. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304389405001433>.
- 114 Z. Zhang, J. Liu, Z. Wang and J. Zhang, Bimetallic Fe–Cu-based metal–organic frameworks as efficient adsorbents for gaseous elemental mercury removal, *Ind. Eng. Chem. Res.*, 2020, **60**(1), 781–789.
- 115 W. Wu and J. Wang, Adsorption removal of uranium from aqueous solution by hydroxyapatite: Recent advances and prospects, *Ann. Nucl. Energy*, 2024, **206**, 110609. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S030645492400272X>.
- 116 L. Sheng, D. Ding and H. Zhang, Efficient removal of uranium from acidic mining wastewater using magnetic phosphate composites, *Sep. Purif. Technol.*, 2024, **337**, 126397. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1383586624001369>.
- 117 S. Wang, H. Zhuang, X. Shen, L. Zhao, Z. Pan, L. Liu, *et al.*, Copper removal and recovery from electroplating effluent with wide pH ranges through hybrid capacitive deionization using CuSe electrode, *J. Hazard. Mater.*, 2023, **457**, 131785. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304389423010683>.
- 118 K. F. Kayani and A. M. Abdullah, Eco-Friendly Fluorescent Detection Method for Cu²⁺ ions Combined with Smartphone-Integrated Paper Strip Sensors Based on Highly Fluorescent 2-Aminoterephthalic Acid in Milk Samples, *J. Food Compos. Anal.*, 2024, 106577.
- 119 R. G. Jalu, T. A. Chamada and D. R. Kasirajan, Calcium oxide nanoparticles synthesis from hen eggshells for removal of lead (Pb(II)) from aqueous solution, *Environ. Challenges*, 2021, **4**, 100193. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667010021001724>.
- 120 H. R. Ahmed, K. F. Kayani, N. N. M. Agha and R. F. Hamarawf, Comparative kinetic analysis of eggplant biomass and biochar as green adsorbents for lead removal from aqueous solutions, *Environ. Prog. Sustainable Energy*, 2025, e14650.
- 121 F. T. Alshorifi, S. M. El Dafrawy and A. I. Ahmed, Fe/Co-MOF nanocatalysts: greener chemistry approach for the removal of toxic metals and catalytic applications, *ACS Omega*, 2022, **7**(27), 23421–23444.
- 122 S. Sengupta, S. B. Shrikala, N. Gumber, A. S. Suneesh, B. Sreenivasulu, M. Chandra, *et al.*, Development of highly efficient bimetallic metal organic frameworks for the extraction of Pd (ii) from aqueous solutions, *New J. Chem.*, 2024, **48**(9), 3877–3891.
- 123 N. A. Mazlan, A. Lewis, F. S. Butt, R. Krishnamoorthi, S. Chen and Y. Huang, Bimetallic reduced graphene oxide/zeolitic imidazolate framework hybrid aerogels for efficient heavy metals removal, *Front. Chem. Sci. Eng.*, 2024, **18**(8), 89.
- 124 Z. Shen, W.-M. Zhang, Z. Shan, S.-F. Li, G. Zhang and J. Su, Bimetal–Organic Frameworks Incorporating Both Hard and Soft Base Active Sites for Heavy Metal Ion Capture, *Inorg. Chem.*, 2024, **63**(19), 8615–8624.

